

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 CU-04 NIC-01 OMB-01 COME-00 EB-11

LAB-06 SIL-01 IO-14 ACDA-19 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 DRC-01

EURE-00 /175 W

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P 061800Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9722

INFO AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

AMCONSUL LYON

AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE

AMCONSUL MARSEILLE

AMCONSUL NICE

AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 13771

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, FR

SUBJECT: CHIRAC'S JUNE 5 POLICY STATEMENT TO NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY

1. SUMMARY. PRIME MINISTER CHIRAC'S FIRST MAJOR POLICY
STATEMENT WAS MAINLY AN AFFIRMATION OF PRINCIPLES WHICH
WILL REASSURE GAULLISTS IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. SPEECH
STUCK TO GENERALITIES, CONCENTRATED ON DOMESTIC POLICY
AND BROKE LIMITED NEW GROUND IN LABOR FIELD. ANTI-
INFLATION MEASURES WILL BE SPELLED OUT JUNE 12, AND
SOCIAL MEASURES ON JUNE 19. END SUMMARY.

2. PRIMARY AIM OF CHIRAC'S 80-MINUTE SPEECH WAS TO
SUSTAIN PLEDGE TO CHANGE FRANCE, BUT IN MANNER WHICH
WOULD PLACATE THE UDR. IN THIS HE SEEMS TO HAVE
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SUCCEEDED. GAULLIST PRESS ORGAN LA NATION NOTED JUNE 6

THAT CHIRAC SATISFIED THE CONDITIONS POSED BY THE GAULLISTS FOR THEIR SUPPORT. SPEECH CONTAINED VIRTUALLY NOTHING THAT GAULLISTS COULD OBJECT TO. ONE COULD READILY IMAGINE A PRIME MINISTER UNDER POMPIDOU DELIVERING THE SAME SPEECH.

3. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT CHIRAC'S STAFF PREPARED THE SPEECH, CHIRAC HIMSELF WORKED IT OVER, AND THE ELYSEE MADE NO SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES. SPEECH THUS IS PRIME MINISTER'S OWN, ALTHOUGH IT OBVIOUSLY DREW ON GISCARD'S PUBLISHED VIEWS. CHIRAC'S DELIVERY, ALTHOUGH VIGOROUS AND CONFIDENT, WAS SOMEWHAT MONOTONOUS AND UNINSPIRING.

4. FOREIGN POLICY PORTION OF SPEECH CONTAINED NO MAJOR SURPRISES. CHIRAC PROBABLY WANTED TO SAY AS LITTLE ON FOREIGN POLICY AS HE COULD GET AWAY WITH. MAIN THEME WAS THAT GISCARD'S GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE THE SAME BASIC FOREIGN POLICY AS ITS PREDECESSORS, STRESSING "NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE"-- DEFINED WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON ABILITY TO MAKE DECISIONS ON BASIS OF FRANCE'S OWN INTERESTS. CHIRAC DESCRIBED US RELATIONS USING NOW FAMILIAR FORMULA GISCARD HAS BEEN EMPLOYING: FRANCE HOPES TO DEVELOP ACTIVE AND FRIENDLY COOPERATION ON A BASIS OF "STRICT EQUALITY." HE SAID IT IS CLEAR THAT FRENCH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCLUDES CLOSE TIES WITH THE WORLD'S LEADING ECONOMIC POWER. CHIRAC AFFIRMED FRANCE'S "DETERMINED ATTACHMENT" TO ITS ALLIANCES WITHOUT NAMING THEM. HE ALSO MADE CLEAR THAT FRANCE WILL CONTINUE THE DEVELOPMENT OF ITS NUCLEAR DETERRENT.

5. CHIRAC'S REMARKS ON "DETENTE" CONTAINED A HINT OF POSSIBLY SLIGHT DEGREE OF GREATER FLEXIBILITY IN FRENCH EAST-WEST POLICIES. HE STRESSED THAT FRENCH DIPLOMACY WILL SPARE NO EFFORT TO STRENGTHEN RELATIONS WITH COUNTRIES BELONGING TO DIFFERENT MILITARY ALLIANCES. (IN THIS CONTEXT HE INDICATED THAT GOF WILL CONTINUE REGULAR CONSULTATIONS WITH USSR ON WORLD PROBLEMS). THIS VAGUE FORMULATION GIVES GOF SOME FLEXIBILITY TO TAKE STEPS THAT IT BELIEVES WILL FURTHER DETENTE (IT WOULD NOT EXCLUDE SOME FORM OF PARTICIPATION IN ARMS
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CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AREA) OR PERHAPS TO LAUNCH A FUTURE FRENCH INITIATIVE. WHILE WE DO NOT EXPECT ANY MAJOR SUDDEN DEPARTURE FROM ESTABLISHED FRENCH POLICY, IT SEEMS TO US THIS AREA BEARS WATCHING FOR POSSIBLE SIGNS OF EVOLUTION.

6. CHIRAC RESERVED HIS SHARPEST LANGUAGE FOR ATTACKING BRITISH DEMAND FOR RENEGOTIATION OF ITS EC MEMBERSHIP.

HE SAID FRANKLY BRITISH DEMAND DOES NOT APPEAR
RECONCILABLE WITH FUNDAMENTAL COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES, NOR
WITH LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF THE EIGHT OTHER MEMBERS.
GOF, HE ADDED, WILL SHOW GREAT FIRMNESS ON ALL ESSENTIAL
POINTS. HE DEFENDED THE CAP IN UNCOMPROMISING TERMS,
SAYING THAT THE EUROPEAN ECONOMY OWES AN IMPORTANT PART
OF ITS EQUILIBRIUM TO IT, AND THAT EUROPE'S FARMERS
HAVE FOUND IN IT THE ESSENTIAL CONDITION FOR THEIR
PROGRESS.

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7. MAJOR PORTION OF SPEECH, ON DOMESTIC AFFAIRS, WAS
LONG ON PROMISES BUT SHORT ON SPECIFIC PROPOSALS.

CHIRAC HAD HARSH WORDS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY SYSTEM WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS HAVING BEEN CHARACTERIZED FOR SEVERAL YEARS BY "PROFOUND ANARCHY." BROAD-BRUSH TREATMENT OF PLANS TO TRANSFORM FRENCH SOCIETY SEEMED LARGELY DRAWN FROM GISCARD'S CAMPAIGN SPEECHES. SPEECH DID NOT CONTAIN GOF'S PRESCRIPTION FOR ATTACKING INFLATION -- SURE TO BE UNPOPULAR. INSTEAD, CHIRAC INDICATED THAT FINANCE MINISTER FOURCADE WILL PRESENT TO ASSEMBLY'S FINANCE COMMISSION JUNE 12 A GLOBAL PROGRAM OF ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL MEASURES, AIMED AT RESTORING FRANCE'S EXTERNAL COMMERCIAL BALANCE AND

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SLOWING DOWN PRICE RISES. GOVERNMENT WILL PROCEED WITH FIRST STAGE OF ITS SOCIAL REFORMS BEGINNING JUNE 19. CHIRAC ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT GOVERNMENT WILL SEND TO THE ASSEMBLY A DRAFT LAW LOWERING VOTING AGE (NEW AGE UNSPECIFIED) AND WILL CALL FOR VOTE DURING PRESENT SESSION.

8. IN LABOR FIELD CHIRAC'S ADVOCACY OF NEED TO PROTECT WORKERS AGAINST LAY-OFFS FOR ECONOMIC REASONS WAS COINED IN DECISIVE TERMS, REVEALING A DETERMINATION TO COME TO GRIPS WITH A DIFFICULT PROBLEM WHICH IS CLOSEST TO THE HEART OF WORKERS AND THEIR LEADERS. ONE OF VERY FEW SURPRISES OF CHIRAC'S SPEECH WAS HIS TREATMENT OF QUESTION OF STRUCTURE OF AUTHORITY AT PLANT LEVEL AND NEED FOR REFORMS WHICH WOULD ENHANCE WORKERS' FREEDOM AT WORK SITE. SPEECH IN FACT ADVOCATED INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY AS SUPPLEMENT TO POLITICAL DEMOCRACY. INTERESTINGLY THIS IS THE APPROACH CFDT HAS TAKEN TO WHOLE RANGE OF PROBLEMS CONCERNING WORK CONDITIONS. ANOTHER SURPRISE WAS ANNOUNCEMENT THAT A SECRETARY OF STATE WILL BE SPECIALLY CHARGED WITH PROBLEM OF IMMIGRANT WORKERS.

9. PARIS MORNING PRESS JUNE 6 WAS GENERALLY DISAPPOINTED WITH CHIRAC PRESENTATION. EXCEPTION WAS LA NATION WHICH HEADLINED "CHIRAC BEGINS WELL." BUT COMBAT CALLED IT A "DISASTER" AND PRIVATE RADIO STATION EUROPE 1 THOUGHT HE "COULD HAVE DONE BETTER." FIGARO'S XAVIER MARCHETTI (POMPIDOU'S LAST PRESS SPOKESMAN, NOW A POLITICAL WRITER) SAID CHIRAC "DID NOT RESPOND WITH WHAT WAS EXPECTED." AURORE DECLARED SPEECH COULD HAVE BEEN DELIVERED BY "ANY OF CHIRAC'S PREDECESSORS," AND COMMUNIST HUMANITE COMPLAINED OF "THE ETERNAL RETURN OF THE MOST VARIED PROMISES." LE MONDE'S FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL AFTERNOON JUNE 6 FOCUSED ON FOREIGN POLICY ASPECTS OF SPEECH, AND FOUND BOTH "CHANGE" AND "CONTINUITY." IT IS IN THE "TONE AND THE SILENCES" OF

SPEECH THAT LE MONDE FOUND SUCH CHANGE AND NOTED IN THIS REGARD CHIRAC'S "PARTICULAR WARMTH" IN SPEAKING OF THE UNITED STATES.

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10. FOLLOWING DEBATE, VOTE ON GOVERNMENT PROGRAM WILL TAKE PLACE EVENING OF JUNE 6, WITH GOVERNMENT CERTAIN TO GET MAJORITY. COMMUNISTS, SOCIALISTS AND LEFT RADICALS (TOTTALLING AROUND 180 VOTES OUT OF 490) WILL OPPOSE. IT WILL BE INTERESTING TO SEE HOW MANY GAULLIST DIEHARDS ABSTAIN. FOLLOWING CHIRAC'S SPEECH WHICH MET THEIR CONCERNS DIRECTLY, WE EXPECT GAULLIST DEFECTIONS WILL BE FEW.

11. COMMENT. CHIRAC'S SPEECH WAS NEXT LOGICAL MOVE IN GISCARD'S DRIVE TO GET HIS GOVERNMENT OFF TO A QUICK START. DEFINITE TIMETABLE FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL MEASURES SHOULD HELP MAINTAIN MOMENTUM. HOWEVER, TWO-WEEK DELAY BEFORE ANNOUNCEMENT OF FIRST SOCIAL REFORM MEASURES MAKES IT INCREASINGLY LESS LIKELY THAT THESE MEASURES CAN TAKE HOLD BEFORE SUMMER VACATION PERIOD SETS IN. FACT THAT NO SPECIFIC, HIGH-VISIBILITY SOCIAL REFORM MEASURES WERE INCLUDED IN CHIRAC'S ADDRESS COULD MEAN THAT GISCARD HAS DECIDED THAT SUCH ANNOUNCEMENTS WILL COME FROM THE ELYSEE.

12. SEE SEPTTEL FOR FURTHER DETAILS ON ECONOMIC PORTION OF SPEECH. POUCHING SPEECH TEXT TO EUR/WE.
IRWIN

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